

the WEIRD WORLD
of

JACK STAFF

BRITAIN'S GREATEST HERO!



Image

4

\$3.50

the WEIRD WORLD of **JACK STAFF** BRITAIN'S GREATEST HERO



WRITTEN & DRAWN BY
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☆ COLOURED BY ☆
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Okay, this is just between you and me, you understand? I've got a confession to make, and I like to think you're the sort of person who will be able to listen without being judgmental. The thing is, and this may come as a surprise to you, I like sound effects in comics. Don't look at me like that... I know we're all supposed to be sophisticated readers of the graphic medium nowadays, but let's be honest here, if I say SNIKT to you, you know exactly what I mean*.

FLAG WAVING

Sound effects are part of the whole visual vocabulary that's available to comics, but seem to be a little bit out of favour nowadays. I blame it all on the 'Wham! Bang! Pow! Comics are Grown Up Now!' type of headlines that can still crop up in the media when reporting about comics.

For me sound effects act as the soundtrack in comics - after all, you can't hear anything in a comic, but you want to have something on the page that can conjure up the tap tap on the door or the BAAAAOOM! as it's blown off its hinges by some kind of shoulder held grenade launching device. There's nothing childish about that, is there? Not having sound effects would be like watching a film without the sound - you can't deafen the reader with the sound of an explosion on the page, so try and find some other way to represent that visually.

Like speech balloons, sound effects are an important visual element on the page and I think they should be used a bit more creatively than they sometimes are, so they add to the reading experience in a way that is uniquely comics. After all we shouldn't be spending our time trying to make our comics look more like films on the page but rather exploring the ways in which the medium is unique and vital (and fun) in its own right.

Whilst working on the previous issue (#3) I was stuck for a while on the page where Tom Tom the Robot Man falls from the sky, simply because I couldn't come up with a fitting sound effect to go with the image. So I did what any modern day creative individual does when faced with trying to pick the right word to fit the occasion - in this case a heavy metal object falling from the sky and crashing into the ground - I tweeted it, I used the social network that named itself after a sound effect - and it worked.

Within minutes of my tweet I started to get replies - and an idea for a whole new interactive feature for the Weird World of Jack Staff was born. I always liked it when comics used to have Design A Villain competitions or something like that - and I had thought about running something along those lines for Jack Staff before I realised I would be walking into a potential legal minefield!! - but sound effects? It just might work...

So here's what I'm going to do, I'm going to give you the chance to contribute your very own sound effect to a future issue of Jack Staff, and this is how it works. Firstly you'll need to be following me on twitter (misternist) and at some point during the month, whilst I'm working on the comic, I'll tweet a description of a particular scene or event and you just tweet back a sound effect that you think would fit that situation.

And now for the legal bit: The winner will be chosen by me in a fairly arbitrary fashion. There will be no prize save for the satisfaction of seeing your word in print. No cash alternative. Judges decision is final. It's my comic, so really you're not going to win the argument. I reserve the right to amend the winning entry in such a manner to make it fit the picture or for dramatic effect.

Take your best shot.

Blam! Ka-POW! BUDDAH BUDDAH BUDDAH! Rattatahatahatahatah!

*And in case you didn't that's the sound that Wolverines claws make when he extends them. Welcome to the wonderful world of comics!

DANCING ELEPHANT PRESS

P.O. Box 104
Highbridge, TA9 4WD
ENGLAND

MONDAY.

SEAL
THE
ACCESS
DOORS!

I'M **COMMANDER
HAWKES.**

VOICE
RECOGNITION
CONFIRMED.
GOOD
MORNING
COMMANDER.

I USED TO LEAD A CRIME FIGHTING
GROUP CALLED **UNIT D**. IT WAS
OUR JOB TO HANDLE THE
SUPER VILLAINS.

PREPARE
**THUNDER
SHIP** FOR
IMMEDIATE
LAUNCH!

INITIATING
STARTING
SEQUENCE.
RUNNING
STANDARD
SAFETY
CHECKS.

POWER UP
TWENTY FIVE
PERCENT
COMPLETED.

MENACES BEYOND
THE REACH OF
THE REGULAR
POLICE FORCE.

ESTIMATED
TAKE OFF
TIME
FIFTY THREE
SECONDS.

FIFTY TWO.

OVER
RIDING
SET-UP
PROCEDURE
...

MENACES LIKE
THE SKULL



LATE EVENING
NOVEMBER 18th
1971.

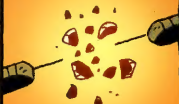


THE STONE WAS FOUND
IN THE MIDDLE OF THE
CRATER.



DAYS LATER, THE STONE
WAS STILL TOO HOT TO
TOUCH. IT SEEMED TO
BE GENERATING ITS
OWN HEAT.

SCIENTISTS INVESTIGATED
THE STONE, HOPING TO
DISCOVER THE SECRET OF
ITS SELF SUSTAINING
ENERGY.



THEY TRIED BREAKING IT
INTO SMALLER PIECES.

BUT THE STONE ALWAYS
REFORMED. EACH TIME
A LITTLE BIGGER THAN
BEFORE...

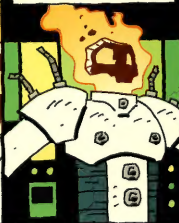


ONLY IT WASN'T JUST
GETTING BIGGER.
IT WAS **GROWING**.

THEY TRIED TO DRAIN
THE ENERGY TO MEET
THEIR OWN POWER NEEDS.

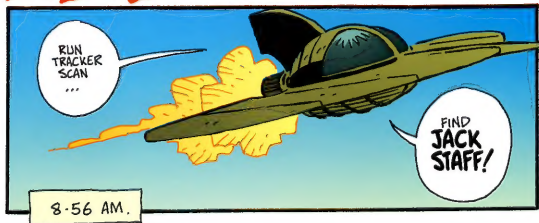
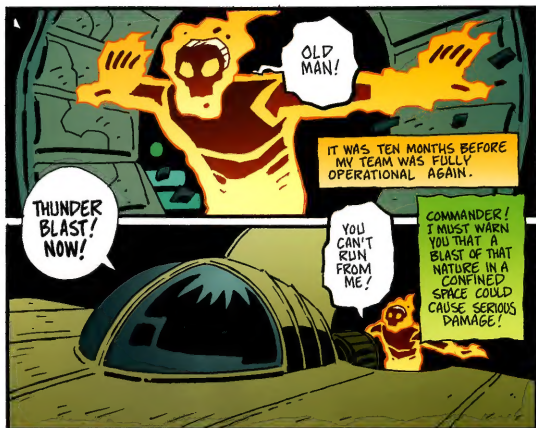


BUT THAT JUST SEEMED
TO BE THE SPARK NEEDED
TO BRING THE SKULL TO LIFE.



JACK STAFF
EVENTUALLY
DESTROYED
THE SKULL
SHATTERING
IT INTO
PIECES.







THIS IS
THE
END OF
EVERYTHING?

WHEN'S
THAT
DUE?

NOT
REALLY
HELPING.



BIT
FUZZY
TO BE
HONEST.

TEMPORAL
DISTORTION
MEANS I
CAN'T GIVE
YOU A
SPECIFIC
DATE.

COULD BE
THREE DAYS
FROM NOW.
COULD BE
THIRTY
YEARS.

IF IT
HELPS, IT'S
PROBABLY
SOMETIME
INBETWEEN.

WELL
THE DATE'S
NOT REALLY
IMPORTANT -
I'M NOT HERE
TO HELP YOU
PLAN YOUR
DIARY.

I'M
HERE TO
SHOW YOU
WHAT'S GOING
TO HAPPEN
SO YOU'LL
UNDERSTAND
WHAT YOU
HAVE TO
DO.



WHO'S
THAT
GUY?

I'M
SURE
I'VE SEEN
HIM
BEFORE
...

UNCLEAR
ON WHO
HE
IS...

BUT THE
STONE ROUND
HIS NECK
IS KNOWN
AS THE
VALIANT
STONE

NO. IT
CAN'T BE.
THAT WAS
DESTROYED.
A LONG
TIME
AGO.

SOMEONE'S
GONE TO A LOT
OF TROUBLE TO
PUT IT BACK
TOGETHER.

THEY'VE CREATED
AN INVULNERABLE
WARRIOR WITH A
SINGLE PURPOSE.

DESTRUCTION.

AND
I HAVE
TO STOP
HIM.
RIGHT?

NO. YOU
CAN'T
INTERFERE.

THAT'S NOT WHY I'VE
BROUGHT YOU HERE.

BUT THERE IS **SOMEONE**
WITH THE POWER TO STOP
HIM.

THERE IS A **CHAMPION.**





SO.

BRITAIN'S
GREATEST
HERO.

JACK
STAFF!

DOESN'T
SAY MUCH
FOR THE
OTHERS
DOES IT?

I KEEP
TELLING YOU
-I'VE NEVER
HEARD
OF THIS
JACK STAFF
GUY...

HMMM

I'M
JOHN
SMITH
...

I'M A
BUILDER.



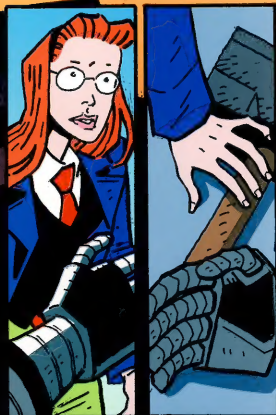
MAYBE
YOU'RE RIGHT.
YOU CERTAINLY
DON'T SEEM
LIKE ANY
KIND OF HERO
I'VE EVER
COME ACROSS
BEFORE.

TELL
YOU WHAT-
HERE'S
WHAT I'M
GOING
TO DO
...

I'LL JUST
BLAST YOU
WITH ENOUGH
POWER TO
OBLITERATE
A NORMAL
HUMAN

IF YOU
SURVIVE
THAT, WE'LL
AGREE YOU'RE
**JACK
STAFF.**









REMEMBER
-- I GAVE
YOU A
CHANCE.

NO!

I'M ON
FIRE!
AAAAH!

HELP
ME!

PLEASE
...

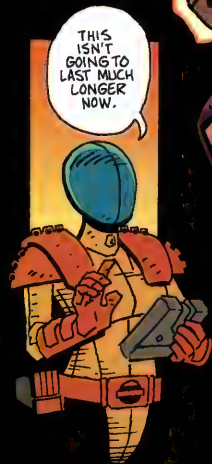
... OH
PLEASE
...

... THE
LOOK ON
YOUR
FACE.



SHOWING
ME GETTING
BEATEN UP
AT THE 'END OF
EVERYTHING'
ISN'T EXACTLY
CONVINCING
ME OF ANY
THING

DON'T
WORRY



THIS
ISN'T
GOING TO
LAST MUCH
LONGER
NOW.



YOUR
STUPID
STUPID
FACE!

NO
WONDER
YOU
WEAR A
MASK!



THAT'S IT
-I'VE GOT TO DO
SOMETHING
-HE'S GOING
TO KILL
HIM!



I MEAN ME!



YEAH.
PROBABLY.



PROBABLY?
I THOUGHT I
WAS SURPRISED
TO **STOP** HIM,
I'M THE
CHAMPION!



WHAT?
YOU? THE
CHAMPION?

HAHAHAHA

OH NO. SORRY.

YOU'RE NOT THE
CHAMPION.

HAHA!

SORRY.



NO, THE
CHAMPION
IS THE ONE
WHO HOLDS THE
SWORD OF
DEVASTATION.

THAT'S THE ONLY
THING THAT'S
GOING TO
STOP THIS
GUY.



SO
WHAT
AM I
THEN?



A DISTRACTION.



HEY!
**GOLDEN
BOY!**





KER
U
N
C
H



WELL
I'VE GOT
NEWS
FOR YOU--



YOU
THINK
YOU'RE SO
HOT
DON'T YOU?



-- YOU'RE
NOT ALL
YOU'RE
CRACKED
UP TO BE!



YOU THINK
I CAN BE
...DESTROYED
THAT...
EASILY?

BREAK
ME INTO A
HUNDRED
PIECES...
A THOUSAND
...IT WOULD
NOT BE...
ENOUGH

RIGHT.
SO YOU'VE
REMEMBERED
THAT YOU'RE
SUPPOSED
TO BE THE
**SUPER
HERO**
ROUND HERE?

ABOUT
TIME
TOO.

I
REMEMBER
...

SOME
THINGS.

SOME
ONE SEEMS
TO HAVE BEEN
MESSING AROUND
IN MY HEAD.
BUT I DON'T
KNOW WHO.

OR
WHY.

JUST
REMEMBER
-THIS IS
YOUR
WEIRD
WORLD,
NOT MINE.

SO, IN
FUTURE
JUST KEEP
ME OUT
OF IT.

OKAY?

I'M
SORRY
BECKY.
I REALLY
AM.

AND WITH
EACH BLOW
I MAKE
MYSELF
STRONGER
...

OH
SHUT
UP!

SKA

ASH



IT'S
NOT
OVER
YET!



BUT I
THINK WE
ALL LIVE IN
A **WEIRD**
WORLD
NOW.



AND YOUR
JOB IS TO
MAKE SURE
SHE SURVIVES
LONG ENOUGH
TO USE
IT.

THE WOMAN YOU KNOW AS
BECKY BURDOCK IS THE CHAMPION.

HER HAND WILL HOLD THE
SWORD OF **DEVASTATION**.

STAFF POST

P.O. BOX 104, HUNGBURY, TA9 4WD, UK • paulgrist1960@hotmail.co.uk

I really enjoyed the latest issue. It seems that we have indeed been given a sort of vague origin for Jack Staff - not too many details, but enough to maybe answer some questions for now. I kept thinking "Britain's Greatest Hero" must be somehow Arthurian, although I guess that hasn't been ruled out by anything we've learned.

I loved the purple cover - I thought it looked different in a very good way from most of the titles on the shelves. I was sorry that we had all complained so much about #2's cover. Hopefully, we'll be nicer in the future. We don't want to scare off other artists who might want to support Paul - after all that is something that worked well for Hellboy and Madman.

I loved Morlan's appearance, of course, being a huge Alan Moore fan - Morlan always makes me laugh out loud, and that's a thing few other comics accomplish. In fact, I think the last one was actually an Alan Moore comic, Tomorrow Stories.

I'm still wondering about the woman in the helmet... since it can't be Helen, who is lying there wounded or dead, I'm leaning toward Tricia, grown up. But the figure (ahem!) does more resemble the curves of Lynda Jones, and that could tie in with the enigmatic comments she's dropped here and there. I have always felt that poster girls are from another reality, anyway.

Going in, I thought I would be very upset if we didn't get the missing memory issue cleared up this time. But there was so much cool, entertaining stuff it didn't bother me as much as I thought it might. With Jack Staff, there are certain givens - you know John Smith didn't rob the store in the last series, of course, but you had to wait a while to find out how it worked. Patience, patience. We're still waiting to find out about the attack on The Spider - er, excuse me, Alfred Chinard! - but it looks like he will be the central focus in a couple issues.

Say, just because he can't be called The Spider any longer - I wonder - can he be called The King of Crooks? Probably not. I bet Paul can make up an interesting analogue to that title, though.

I have some requests, besides finding out what means what and how things will turn out with immediate storylines...

-- I'd like to see Jack and Becky be nice, hang out, or something like that - although their antipathies are still funny, it is close to feeling too familiar, just that same old plot tool once again. I'd like 'em to make up... I'm just a sofie, I guess.

-- I really want to see what Charlie Raven has been up to in the modern world! He's one of my favorites!

-- I'd like to see the Four Good Guys, too, just for kicks.

Finally, I am looking forward to the Mud Man's return, which I think will be happening soon. I'm a little worried about the Mask of Fate on Becky, as shown on an up-coming cover.

Finally finally (really!) is there anyone out there who thinks they can explain the Eternal Warrior story in Popgun? It left me quite baffled. But in a good way!

Steve Replogle
(via Image/Jack Staff message board)

I'll be going into the whole memory loss thing next issue Steve. If I remember.

How about Alfred Chinard, Prince of Thieves? He'll be back in issue 7 and then running round in issue 10 - 12 if my current plan is anything to go by. I keep trying to squeeze the Four Good Guys in (though there's only three of them nowadays. The invisible one hasn't been seen for a while now) - perhaps I can fit them into a Krazy Kosmic Summer Special next year?

And as for the Eternal Warrior? Keep reading - hopefully it will all make sense in around 10 - 15 years. Actually I should mention that Popgun 3 won the Eisner Award

for Best Anthology of 2009 at the recent San Diego Convention, so congratulations to all those involved - do we all get a plaque to go on the wall?

Dear Mr. Grist,

Thank you for introducing me to the world of British comics. Living in the United States, I bought my first issue of Jack Staff in 2002 and was hooked, and I have stayed faithfully with the comic ever since. The characters and storytelling found in Jack Staff inspired me to learn more about the book's antecedents and inspirations, and over the years I have discovered and accumulated a nice collection of original British weeklies and annuals (mostly Eagle and Valiant, as well as the more modern 2000 A.D. and Judge Dredd Magazine); I believe that I have the largest collection of British comics in Kansas City, Missouri! In issue three, I was happy to read your clarification of the story that Jack Staff began as a re-worked Union Jack proposal that was not used by Marvel Comics. I was not surprised to learn that this was, in fact, not the case; Jack Staff is a British original that celebrates the rich tradition of British comics, and I look forward to reading it (and other British comics) for years to come.

Sincerely,

Jeremy Beebe
Kansas City, MO

Thanks Jeremy! I do worry that sometimes readers can be a bit put off Jack Staff because of the references to old British comics (something that tends to be made more of in write ups about the comic than I think I actually do in the comic) so it's good to know that people can 'get it' without that background.

Dear Paul,

So am I to take from all this that you are British...? Kiddin'. Although I've read Jack Staff before, this was definitely all kinds of weird -and Talented! People used to ask Stephen King all the time When was he going to do a straight, non-horror piece, ya know? Well, Paul, when are you gonna do a straight, non-Non-linear piece?? Cause Pulp Fiction was a while ago, now.

The artwork bristles with talent. The character of Jack Staff is hardly used though! And of course non-linearity, if you will, does lead to some confusion on the readers part. I would suggest more guest-covers really-Ian Churchill doesn't do near enough of anything for my tastes-and just, sigh, try to get better and better! Is this a monthly comic? Bimonthly? Trimonthly?? Hey, it's possible. Anyway, I liked it, pretty much; better than Brigade #1, debuting this week. Think clouds.

Sincerely,

Andrew J. Shaw

Okay Andrew here's the deal - you keep reading and I'll just keep on getting better and better.

ORIGINAL ART FOR SALE

Single pages of the original black and white art from Jack Staff are available at £75UK \$150US each. Covers are £150UK \$300US each. Prices include postage and packing. Pages are also available from The Eternal Conflicts of the Cosmic Warrior, Torchwood and Doctor Who. Contact me by e-mail if you want to check availability of a particular page or if you want to reserve a particular page. First come first served. Cheques payable to Paul Grist.

NEXT ISSUE

The secret of the Woman in the Helmet is revealed (for the couple of you who haven't figured it out yet) as Becky Burdock saves the day. Or Jack Staff dies. To be honest it could go either way. Really.



THE NEW YORK TIMES
THE NEW YORK TIMES
THE NEW YORK TIMES



THAT'S IT
-I'VE GOT TO DO
SOMETHING
-HE'S GOING
TO KILL
HIM!

I MEAN ME!

YEAH.
PROBABLY.

Minutemen - Ty'd Emma



minutemen



Scans' n' edits